

Claims

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3 1. An apparatus for automated negotiation, including
4 a server, including a computer program that acts as a negotiation engine;
5 a database, including a directory of prospective negotiating parties;
6 a first client device, under the control of a first party who initiates said
7 automated negotiation;
8 one or more second client devices under the control of one or more second
9 parties; and
10 a communication system.

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12 2. An apparatus as in claim 1, wherein said computer program includes
13 a first instruction to selectively associate one or more entries in said database with infor-
14 mation provided by said first party, so as to create an invitation to a particular said auto-
15 mated negotiation.

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17 3. An apparatus as in claim 2, including a means for sending said invi-
18 tation to said one or more second parties.

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20 4. An apparatus as in claim 1, wherein said computer program includes
21 a second instruction to compile terms suggested by said one or more second parties.
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1 5. An apparatus as in claim 4, including a means for presenting said
2 compiled terms in a tabular form to said first party.

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4 6. An apparatus as in claim 1, including a means for transmitting a re-
5 sponse from said first party regarding information by said second party in real time.

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7 7. An apparatus as in claim 1, wherein said communication system in-
8 cludes a wireless transmitter and receiver.

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10 8. An apparatus as in claim 1, wherein said database is a relational da-
11 tabase.

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13 9. An apparatus as in claim 1, wherein said database is an object-
14 oriented database.

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16 10. A method for automated negotiation, including steps for
17 identifying one or more parties;
18 setting the parameters of said automated negotiation;
19 sending an invitation to said automated negotiation to one or more parties;
20 making an offer in response to said invitation;
21 responding to said offer;
22 storing information in a database.

1 11. A method as in claim 10, wherein said step of identifying prospec-
2 tive partners is performed automatically by a computer program that searches a database.

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4 12. A method as in claim 10, wherein said step of identifying prospec-
5 tive partners is performed by the initiator of said automated negotiation.

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7 13. A method as in claim 10 wherein said step of identifying prospective
8 partners includes setting various parameters for access control and preferences so as to
9 create private negotiations and private directories.

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11 14. A method as in claim 10, wherein said step of setting the parameters
12 is performed by an initiator of said automated negotiation through a series of interactions
13 with a computer program.

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15 15. A method as in claim 14, wherein said series of interactions includes
16 defining the type of said automated negotiation;
17 specifying terms that can be varied; and
18 specifying a range over which said terms can be varied.

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20 16. A method as in claim 10, wherein said invitation includes informa-
21 tion included in said parameters.

1 17. A method as in claim 10, wherein said invitation is sent to said one
2 or more parties using a computerized communication system.

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4 18. A method as in claim 17, wherein said computerized communication
5 system includes a wireless transmitter and receiver.

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7 19. A method as in claim 10, wherein said step of making an offer is per-
8 formed by a party other than the sender of said invitation.

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10 20. A method as in claim 10, wherein said step of responding to said of-
11 fer includes accepting the offer, rejecting the offer or making a counter offer.

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13 21. A method as in claim 10, wherein said step of responding is per-
14 formed by the party that sent said invitation.

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16 22. A method as in claim 10, wherein said step of storing information
17 includes information concerning said automated negotiation.

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19 23. A method as in claim 10, wherein said step of storing information
20 includes information regarding the relative performance of one or more parties to said
21 automated negotiation.

1 24. A method as in claim 10, wherein said step of storing information is
2 independent of any particular outcome of said automated negotiations.

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4 25. A method as in claim 10, wherein said information is stored on a re-
5 lational database.

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7 26. A method as in claim 10, wherein said information is stored on an
8 object-oriented database.

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